

This is BILK 44 - November 1991 - BILK appears bi-monthly and is published by Ulrich Magin - Stuhlbruderhofstr. 4 - W-6704 Mutterstadt - Germany. Subs are DM 15 per year and news and views are always welcome

BEHEMOTH

- Lake Thümmnitz, Germany: One of two German lake monsters this year, the Thümmnitzsee creature was reported in the tabloid Bild on June 26. In the lake in Saxonia, two anglers caught a 60 cm / 2 ft animal which hissed like a cat. It was brought to Leipzig zoo where it only ate raw meat.
- Chiemsee: Lake Chiem is a large body of water in Bavaria. Again, in Bild, June 25 and 26, we learn that on Saturday, Max Pertl, 43, a teacher, vanished from his boat close to the Chieminger Loch near Unterhochstädt. All that was found was his empty drifting boat. A police spokesperson: "His rod was twisted, the hook torn off. The fish must have been big and heavy enough to draw the man over board." In the following days issue, biologist Vitus B Driescher explains only a catfish could have done this. Well, maybe. Catfish are behind most lake monster stories, but this case looks like the tabloid making the most out of a normal "drowning fisherman story". I'll try to find out more about these two German reports.
- Books: This year in Britain, I saw several reprints of monster books, but little new titles. I recall a Aberdeen University Press edition of Stuart Campbell's book, a Scottish paperback of Henry Bauer's, Dinsdale's LNM (4th ed.) reprint and a heavy collection of Adrian Shine's papers in the LNM Exhibition.
- Loch Ness monster, bibliography: Many titles on the LNM and other freshwater beasties from the Offenburger Tageblatt (OT), credit Josef Garcia: Project Urquhart (Welt 20.7., Mannheimer Morgen, 20.7., also reprinted in CENAP Report 9/91, p.23); OT, 20.7. / LN in general: Quick 25/91, p.60 / Florida lizard: OT 28.2.91 / Fürth River Monster OT 27.8.90 / Lake Erie monster OT 1.10.90 / Ogoopogo, BILD 24.07.90 / hunting dinos in Africa, Bild 13.2.91 / LN & tourist industry, OT 29.5.90 / Tatzelwurm reports of 1934: Bild am Sonntag 8.4.90 / 1990 search for LNM, OT 18.5.1990 / Walt Disney's movie Baby on surviving dinos in Africa in German TV channel ARD on July 26. / article on hunt for Nessie in Die Bunte, 6. - 13. Nov 1987. / Fortean Times 58: p. 16 giant water serpents in the Matto Grosso, p. 18 panama lizard, p. 52 1932 Nessie landighting, interesting article by Mike Dash, who is obviously ignorant of the 6 or 7 LN land sightings in the 1959 - 1975 period. / Diverse Loch Ness news in Fortean Times 59, p.10, which includes also infos on Project Urquhart, to which also the latest issue of Ness-letter is exclusively dedicated.

ISIS:

- Australia: The Return of the Son of the Lizardman, Part III: While in Britain, I was talking to everybody about my plans of doing a feature of mermaid- and lizardman-like creatures in flying saucers. Well, they still come, and I received a new report by someone who did not even know I was especially looking for them. Ok, here it comes: Austrian Hartwig Rüdiger Bayerl and his pregnant friend Susan Zack went to Australia in 1982 because Bayerl believed an atomic war would destroy the earth and lizard-like extraterrestrials would take over earth aided by the Freemasons. In Adelaide Bayerl built a nuclear shelter in 1984 which he equipped with food, protection clothing and gas masks. In 1989 Bayerl believed he was Christ reborn. He met Austrian Johann Manfred Weissensteiner after moving to Cairns in 1989, both worked on changing Bayerl's yacht Immanuel into a vessel that would survive atomic warfare. After a few more twists in the story, the two want to sail to the Pacific to colonise some islands, and, in Sept 90 Weissenstein is discovered with the yacht but without the couple, in the South Sea. He is now charged with murder though no bodies have been found. The newspaper clippings I have (Darmstädter Echo and Süddeutsche Zeitung 12 Sept 91) are both very long and not clearly written, but it appears all three believed in the coming doom and the lizard men. Lizard-like ETs also appear in the TV serial "V" and the German SF movie "Enemy mine".
- A further article of Francois de Sarre on initial bipedism and the theory that once man was a water dwelling animal in 3^o Millenaire no. 19, Paris pp. 86 - 88.

LEVIATHAN:

- Fiji: The Fiji cave monsters which I mentioned some time ago in Bilk have now appeared in most major Fortean magazines. Fortean Times 58, p.28, has a summary of the discovery of the monster remains in a Fiji cave, and lists several vague

sightings of monstrous water life close to the Fiji Islands. It seems whenever a monstrous carcass has been found people will come forward with sightings, as was the case in Cornwall in 1976 when a dead whale was washed ashore and the Morgawr episode (was?) started... Science Frontiers 77 now informs the monsters have been identified as dolphin bones.

● Big Turtle News: Referring to Cornwall, I saw a booklet in Falmouth library on "Turtles off the Cornish and Devon Coast" from ca. 1989, but I forgot to take note of author and publisher... If anybody has a copy, I'd like to know. The book lists all sightings of large turtles, including a leatherback caught in Sept 1949 off Cornwall (cf. Harold Wilkins sea serpent) and claims the British Museum has positively identified the Vinnicombe/Rees sea monster off the Lizard in 1976 as a leatherback turtle. I've always said that 90 % of British sea serpents are due to turtles, whales and basking sharks. A recent leatherback capture, according to the Western Morning News, Sept 26, 90, was a 8ft turtle found at Looe, Cornwall. One week before, a leatherback had been caught at Perranporth.

● Bibliography: Fortean Times 1958, p.55 sea monster of 1750 (seal?) from the Gentlemen's Mag, p. 21 turtle rescue. FT 59, p.54: sea monster in Norfolk, 4.9.1751 (basking shark???). Finally, Science Frontiers 76, has a magnificent selection of leatherback turtle mysteries.

KRAKEN:

● Island Beast: While it has been very popular to follow Heuvelmans interpretation of the Island Beast of the ancients as a misperceived giant squid, this solution is obviously inadequate to explain what the ancient Mariners feared. Moving sandbanks, and mirages, are more likely to have given rise to the idea that some islands are living animals. In the Islander, a newspaper for tourists published by the Orkadian, Kirkwall, Orkney, has, in its 1991 issue an article on Orkney tales. One is about drifting islands off the Orkneys that are explained as mirages. The island of Hether Blether is home of the Finn Folk and can sometimes be seen floating on the waves. During the first world war, the Island North Ronaldsay appeared to float and approach Sanday until it lay shore to shore with it. This natural phenomena rather than giant squids, which, after all, are quite small compared to an island, could be the explanation for island beasts.

● Octopus invasions on the South British coasts: Fortean Times 59, p.7. The article has the mistaken assumption that H G Wells based his short story The Sea Raiders on a 1896 octopus attack at Sedmouth, Cornwall, while in fact the Sedmouth incident is only H G Wells' story turned into fact by a newspaper! The mistake comes, I believe, from a garbled version of Michel Raynal's research in an old ASSAP news magazine taken over at this time by FT in about 1984. Probably an error that is to stay in the field of Cryptozoology.

● A giant squid, *Taninga danae*, 7ft in length, was caught in Dec 1990 by the fishing boat Defender off Massachusetts. Report in Fortean Times 59, p.6.

WHALES:

● 50 dead porpoises washed ashore at Danish North Sea coast (Rheinfalt 20.7.)

● Within a month, 60 dead dolphins were washed ashore at the coasts of Sicily, Calabria and Sardinia. They fell prey to the same disease that killed many dolphins in Spain in 1990 (Rheinfalt 16.8.)

● A 20 m / 70 ft fin whale stranded at Walkers Point, Maine shortly before Hurricane Bob made headlines (Sonntag Aktuell, 25.8.)

● Since July, 160 dead dolphins stranded in Apulia, Italy. 1990, only 21 and in 89 10 dolphins were found. They had been killed by a virus. (Rheinfalt 24.10.)

TIDBITS:

● A 19-year old student was killed by a 10 ft shark south of Adelaide, Australia (Rheinfalt 9.9.91) / ● At Inverness, but in Florida, 71-year-old George Blinn was attacked by an alligator when he slipped and fell into a canal. Blinn escaped the creature when he put his finger into its eye (Sonntag Aktuell 18.8, p.40) / ● Ian Wilson, according to Bild 29.7., believes 2 English ships discovered America in 1481. / ● A new species of beaked whale was discovered off Peru: Die Welt, 18.5. + 28.4.1991 (credit: Josef Garcis). / ● The new LP by pop group The Wedding Present is called Seamonsters.